



The Oppugnation and fierce siege of
Ostend, *by the Arch-duke Albertus*
his Forces, commanded by the Duke of Ossuna,
who came before the said Towne, the fift day of Iune
last past (after their writing) shewing what
hath hapned since the time of
the saide siege.



Ostend is a Towne situated
on the Flemish coast, lying
on the arme of the river Y-
perle, thoro'we which the
weast Sluice lately ranne
into the sea, and hath there
made a sufficient tide haven,
which (like as, for the most
parte, all the rest of the fle-
mish hauens, doe ebbe and
flowe: and can not be used
but with an high water, &
at the least wise, at halfe flood) doth notwithstanding conti-
nually holde, and containe the ditches of the Towne full of
water, by reason of Dammes and Sluices made to that end
and purpose, which (soasmuch as it might be in the same
course continued, returned, & perhappes by the enemy di-
verted) they of the Towne haue, of themselves, stopped the
course thereof, whereby they of the Country of Flaunders,
haue bene forced to carry and conuey the same by the Foote
of Albertus, and so by a new current into the Sea.

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In times past, it was but an open village, yet reasonable great, and well peopled. First, after the coming of Don Iohn d'Austria, in the beginning of the now warres, for the fitte and commodious scituation thereof, it was made a Towne, and enironed with strong walles: And afterwards, this Towne only, and none others among all the rest of the sea townes of Flanders remayned, and at this present doth remayne in the possession of amitie of the vnited provinces of Holland and Zeland, howbeit, it lieth in the middle (as it were) of the enemies Countrie, and farre from her friends. And yet mangre all the forces, and power of her enuironing foes, hath many times bene valiantly defended against sundry besiegings and attempts.

For in the yere 1583. although the duke of Parma, with his victorious hoste (after he had taken Dunkerk, and Newport, the next adioyning sea Townes westward) didde in most furious manner bessege it, vntill all warlike meanes hee could possibly to conquer it, was forced to giue place, and after that he had continued his siege five dayes, sawe how bootlesse it was for him to spend any longer time about it, and therefore departed, not effecting any thing agreeable to his wished attempts.

Afterwardes, in the yere 1585. although Monsieur la Motte Gouvernour of Graueling, did, with great force and difficultis winne the olde Towne by the Strand or sea side, which at that time was onely defended with a simple wall, or Raueling and Pallisados, with purpose there presently to intrench and defend himselfe, was againe with all his forces, like sheepe driven out of the same, leauing behind him sortie of his principallest Captaynes and Commanders with all their furniture and promise.

This Towne, without all question, is a place of great advantage, and importaunce, yea of such moment, that it serueth as a bulwarke and strong defence, for the whole province of Zeland, and so contrariwise, if it shoulde fall into the

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the enemies hands (as God forbid) he should thereby commaund a moze fitte and commodious haue for shipping, than any other sea Towne now in his possession can yeilde him. Yea our intollerable losses, not to be recovered doe teach vs, and as it were, with a finger point vnto vs, what inestimable damage might rebound vnto the vniited Provinces, if the enemy should commaund in this Town.

Further, it is to be noted, that the Country of Flaunders, beeing in peace, in all taxations of the seauentene Provinces did leuy the third peny: whereunto they haue bene forced by this Towne, not only during the time of these wars, but also, the greatest part of the maine land hath bene constrained many yeres, to pay toll and contribution, and to be vnder our deuotion.

For which causes, this Towne hath with great care and mighty charges of the vniited Provinces bin daily fortified, and continually strengthned, and especially in the yere last past 1600. as also in the fore parte of this present summer: many workes, I say, haue bene deuised to withstand, and prevent the cruell attempts of the bloody enemy, as bulwarkes, counterpoits, and Ranelings to the landward, neither hath that part lying to the Sea bene forgotten, but hath bene made also very defensible with heades, bankes, and ditches, and especially on the east side of the Towne where (by meanes of the weakenesse of the bankes) the sea, with great force is mightily broken into the land, where it hath stowed, and pierced a great depth; so that the chanel of the new haue (when the water is lowest) is nere fow, pikes deepe: and both daily waxe deeper and deeper, without all doubt, the determinate worke of God, for the great strengthning and playne defence of the Towne.

They of Flaunders generally finding what annoyauce and great discommoditie this Towne threathned daily vnto them, haue solicited and by all meanes possible impoxtuned their Gouvernours, to besiege, and conquer this Towne of

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Ostend, their daily sicke : as of late yeeres (yet fresh in memoire) in the yeare 1596. after that the Archduke Albertus had taken the Towne of Callice, in Fraunce, they required him then to take in hand this peece of worke, promising to giue him twelue hundred thousand guilders within thre moneths time (which in sterling money is one hundred and twenty thousand poundes) wherevnto, after his Highnesse had made shew to yeelde, and promised to fulfill their desire, he got some parte of the summe aforesayde into his handes. But doubting the cunct of the attempt, or knowing how hard a matter it was, to take it by force of armes, or how difficult it would be to constrain the souldiers thereof by hunger, or otherwise, thought it sufficient to shew himselfe before the Towne with his forces, and so quietly to departe.

They of Flaunders herewith nothing at all pleased, and grieved with the continuall verations and incursions of the ranging souldiers, and payment of contributions, to prevent the same, in the yeare of our Lord 1599. while our forces were employed in the defence of Bommel, had good leisure to make sundry forts and bulwarkes, for the strengthening, & defence of the wayes and passages about the towne of Ostend, thereby (as it were with a small kinde of siege) continually to trouble the Towne, and to hinder the incursions of the garison: which device was put into their heads, and the plotte layde downe by a certaine Corporall of the Towne called Noel, who hauing before long serued in the towne, and hauing good experience of the secrets thereof, vpon some discontentment receiued, forsooke the Towne, and ran to the seruice of the enemy.

But as the experience of the last yeare giueth sufficient proofe, that all the strength of these fortres is not able to hinder, or defend the entrance of an Hoste, so also it is most manifest that by the continuall charge of the Garrisons of these fortres, the Country hath receiued more damage and dis-

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commoditie, then before it did by the contribution to their enemies, and Towne of Ostend; wherefore they haue been forced to renewe their Impoꝛtunate sute vnto his Highnes, and to sollicit him againe to the besieging of Ostend, and especially at this instant, knowing our forces to be remoued farre from them, and to be sent into Dutchland lying at the siege of Berck, where they should (as they imagined) haue long worke: And so; the better perswading, and moze easily drawing of the Archduke to harken to this their sute, haue promised to pay him extraoꝛdinarily, three hundredeth thousand gilderns monthely (which is 30 thousand pounds sterling) during the time of the siege, and after the taking of the towne to pay him farther (so; the space of two years) ninety thousand gilderns euery month (which is 9000. £ sterling.

Hereupon th Archduke gathꝛed together al his souldiers: yea such as were about the riuer of Ryne & the Mase, so; the succoꝛ of Berck were sent so; to make their repaire into Flaunders and to serue vnder the command of the Duke of Ossuna, who not long since was to that end sent so; out of Spaine, by reason that the Archdukes campe (tho;ow the long imprisonment of the Admirant of Arragon, and the last ouerthrowe in Flaunders) was wholly left destitute and vnpꝛouided of a sufficient Commander, and experient Leaders, and so; that the naturall Loꝛdes of the land, are in no wise respected no; trusted.

Vpon the fift day of Iune (after the new stile) the enemy came before Ostend, about none, with eight regiments of footmen, which were eight thousand men strong, besides the hoꝛsemen (notwithstanding the Spaniards generally disliked of this enterpryse, and counsellled the contrary, who (as is repoꝛted) do wholly dislike of this siege: and among the rest, two common souldiers that hadde bene the last yeare prisoners in Ostend, obstinately maintaining the inuincible strength of this Towne, were presently

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taken and hanged : for the extreame want of the three hundred thousand gilderns, to be payed monthly, as befoze is saide, comming very sily for the payment of the mutined souldiers, and also the hope to drayve our forces from the siege of Bercke, into Flanders, for the better furnishing of him selfe, & preventing of such wants as might happen to Ostend: and perhaps thinking sodainly, and with al his force to overcharge the towne befoze it should be surroged, have bin the reasons to bring th Archdukes forces now befoze Ostend.

The Duke of Ossuna presently sought to pacifie the garrison of Isabella, which had befoze mutined for their pay : and the next day folowing, being the first day of July, mounted six peeces of ordonance against the east side of the towne upon the Downes, and with the same begonne fiercely to play vpon the Towne.

There were then in the towne in garrison one and twenty Ancients of sundry Regiments, and one company of Burgers, or Towneshmen, all under the direction and command of Captayne Vander Noote. These presently prepared themselves to their defence, making harmelasse, and displacing some of the enemies artillerie : And labouring hard, to make a new way or haven, betwene the heads, to the end the passage of boates and shipping might be freed from the ordonance of the enemy.

And the ninth day of July, after that they had sent away the most parte of their wines and chilsen, they received into the towne (out of Zeland) 28. companies of souldiers, with great abundances of victuals, and all other provision of war.

The tenth day Sir Frances Vere, with eight companies of Englishmen entred into the Towne also, who presently issued out of the Towne with his people, entrenching himselfe on the high plottes of ground next unto the walles, on the west side, from whence the enemy might have endangered the towne, and battered the walles.

The thirteenth day of July, the sayd Sir Frances Vere, with

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with great force and resolution sallied vpon the enemy with eight hundred men, on the west parte of the towne, and set vpon the Campe, which lay farre off diuided from each other, with waters and marish grounds, and can not easily, or in short time come to ayde each other. In which sally, the ennemy lost (as was certified by Letters from Antwerpe) aboue eight hundred men, and among the same, one cornet of horsemen: and, if the whole force of the ennemies horsemen, had not the sooner come to their ayde, it was most apparant to all mens iudgements, that sir Frances had giuen the footemen to great confusion, and taken from them their Ordnance.

The five and twentieth day sir Frances Vere did agayne issue out of the Towne with fiftene hundred men, and beganne to intrench betwene Isabella and Grootendorst, on a high ground, which in times past was an old Churchyard, where they of Isabella and Grootendorst were accustomed to bury their dead, and is a very fitte and apt place, to separate and cutte off these two forces from each others helpe, and to open a faire way to those of Ostend, to the flatte and plaine land. To which place of buriall, the next day, being the sixe and twentieth day of July, the ennemy came with three thousand men, and after hee had bene thrice repulsed, and put to the worst, took the place, but was presently with great force and dexteritie driuen from it agayne.

The same day tenne companies of souldiers arriued at Ostend, and were receiued into the Towne, which were sent thither by her Maiestie from London, so that now the Towne was furnished (within the walles and without) with firtie and seauen companies, which made vp nere the number of seuen thousand men: these tenne companies asforesayde, were presently employed against the enemy, who shewed themselves very valorous, and did, both then, and since, passing good service, although many men were of opinion, that they would proue vnfitte for any service, by

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reason they were rawe, and had not bene trayned.

On the other side, the Archduke daily strengtheneth and encreaseh his Campe, as well with souldiers, as with ordonance, playing continually on the west side with 26. pièces, and on the east side with nine pièces of ordonance, but most of his shotte liteth vppon the houses, whereof many are defaced and beaten downe: For, this five and twentieth day of July, and before, there had bene discharged vppon the Towne sixtane thousand shot, and against the ennemie from the Towne had bene counterchanged six thousand.

Moreouer, there were also receiued into the Campe some parte of the new souldiers which came out of Italie, and had bene appoynted for the succour of Berke, for first there arrived eight hundred men of those companies, and afterwards five and twenty hundred more were sent for, part Italians, and part Spaniards: and besides these, xx. men more out of all the other Ancients vnder the government of the Erle of Barlamont and Bucquoy, who, for this cause, were forced to discharge their wagons, and other provisions, before by them taken vp, and meant to be vsed in raising the siege before Bercke.

There are eightene companies appoynted euery night out of the Towne, to garde sir Frances Veres trenches on the south west parte of the Towne, who daily falleth out vppon the ennemy, with other souldiers of the Towne, and haue oftentimes slayne many of the enemies, & wounded more, which haue bene sent to Bruges from the Campe, so that their Ho. pitalles are full of wounded souldiers, and many Captaines, and men of great accompt, aswell Spaniards, Italians, and others, haue bene slaine in these conflicts, and amongst the rest, a Colonell of the Spaniards was brought to Dunkerke, and there first buried in his armour, and afterwards taken vp againe, and put into the earth in a friars weede, with great solempnitie.

On Sunday, being the five and twentieth day of July
last

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last past, was a great skirmish with the ennemy, which continued very long, and was with great surie, valour, and resolution maintained on both sides, the ennemy supplying his selfe with fresh companies, bringing three, foure, and five companies at a time, and they of the Towne seconding their parte continually with newe supplies, and with like numbers, so that in the end, it seemed rather a little battell, than a skirmish, sometime our people being ouermatched with the fresh companies of their enemies, were forced to giue ground: but presently againe, with their new supplies from the Towne, courageously pressed into the thickest of the enemies, making them likewise to retire into their trenches: and thus it continued long, sometimes the one parte, and sometimes the other giuing ground, untill the ennemies horsemen came in, to succour their footemen, wherevpon our men returned into their trenches, and into the Towne, after they had slaine and spoiled many of their enemies both horse and foot. But if our men had bene furnished with horsemen, the ennemy had lost many more men than he did, both in this skirmish, and all others before: but here in, the enemy hath had the vantage of vs during this siege, notwithstanding it hath bene written from Callice, that after this fight, there were carried out of the Campe to Bruges, three scoze and ten wagons laden with wounded men, and in euery wagon was tenne men at the least: but when they were brought to Bruges, they of the Towne would not receiue them, saying that they had their Hospitallles already full, and could receiue no more, and therefore required that they might be conueyed to some other towne. It was afterwards reported, that the ennemy lost in this skirmish 450. men, besides those that were wounded: neyther was this attempt accomplished, without losse on our side.

Saterday, being the first day of this present moneth of August, they of the Towne issued againe vpon the ennemy, and with great surie (after they had continued skirmish som

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halfe houre) forced them to retire to their trenches, slaying some 80. of their enemies, as nere as could be iudged: but the hoysenmen of the enemy comming in vpon our souldiers, they returned into the Towne, with small losse en our part.

It is reported by some that came very lately from Callice, that on wednesday last, being the fift day of this present moneth of August, there was a great Skirmish begunne by those of the Towne, to hinder the enemies approach vnto the walles, which was with fierce resolution long continued on both sides, and that they of the towne (with great slaughter of their enemies) had taken thre or fve peces of ordonance, and brought the same into the Towne, but how certaine this is (being but a reporte) I cannot write, the truth thereof will be hereafter better knowne.

Sir Frances Vere without the Towne doth daily fortify his trenches: and the Gouvernour within the Towne, with earth raiseth the walles, thereby to auoyde the daunger of the enemies shot, which his Highnesse spareth not, but bestoweth so liberally vpon the Towne, as if he found shot and powder abundauntly in the Downes, or sand-hilles: and withall, laboereth to raise a new Cavallirie, with bauen and earth, thereon to plant more ordonance, and to shote in to the Towne, on the south south west side. Thus they are earnestly busied on all sides, the one, nor the other sparing any cost or laboer to annoy their enemy, and to defend themselves, and that thing which to day is not thought vpon, is the next day put in practise, with new deuises and warlike stratagems, the one raising vp, the other with his ordonance beating downe his ennemies works, that the same may not be finished, or brought to perfection.

It is also written from Antwerpe, that the Infanta is in person come into the Campe, and that the Archduke with Oudenburgh, to the end he may himselfe in person giue order in these affaires: time will teach vs to knowe what profite hee shall reape by these his travels & inestimable charges.

But

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But at her returne from the Camp to Bruges, she brought with her sundry Companies of Souldiers, but they of the Towne denyed to receiue them, saying they had no neede of any new Garrison, but if it pleased her highnes to come into the Towne with her accustomed trayne, she should be welcome: but as for her Souldiers, they were not minded to take them into the Cittie.

Such as haue come out of Ostend very lately, and likewise from Vlashing, repozte for certaine, that within the Towne of Ostend, there wanteth not any thing, fit for the defence thereof, and that all victualles are very plentifull, English beere is solde for twom shuars the kanne, great measure, for which there is no excise payde. Sir Frances Vere giueth the enemye daily so much to doe, and keepeth him so well occupied, that he knoweth not well which way to turne him, or what he may well beginne to annoy the Towne: and it is thought by many men of good iudgement, that he wisheth he had not come to besiege Ostend, seeing he findeth so small hope to carry it, but would rather be with his camp from thence, if he knew how with credite to departe.

Lately the enemy remoued nine peeces of his ordonance, from the east to the weast side: his ordonance made it verie dangerous to enter by the accustomed haven, except it were in the night time, but since the making of the last, or middle haven, all things are carried in and out without any daunger of the enemies shot. And on the south west side the enemy byingeth great store of brulsh and bauen sagots towards the trenches of sir Frances Vere, thinking by that meanes so to mount some ordonaunce, that he may beate sir Frances from his trenches, and so bying his battering peeces nearer vnto the walles, or else, to beate the Towne on the south south west side.

On the south side, the enemy hath raised a mount, from whence he beateth the houses, but specially the Church and Steeple, which is wholly defaced, otherwise, he doeth small

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annoyance to the Towne, sometimes with his shot killing a man: but such as come out of the Towne affirme, that for every one the Towne loseth, the enemy loseth five or sixe. They of the Towne, haue themselves, vntiled and taken downe many houses, and also vnpaned the streets, to theend the same might with the enemies shot, the lesse annoy them.

The Gouvernor and sir Frances are not ydle, but employ all their labour and industrie, both within the Towne and without, to raise mounts, and to finish such other workes, as are most behouefull for the strengthening of the Towne against the enemies forces, and to that end, such souldiers as will worke, and employ their time that way, eyther by day or night, haue xii. d. the day, and xii. d. the night.

And because the enemy shall the better be kept from approaching the walles, they of the Towne haue cutte the Sea bankes, so that the Sea water enuironeth the Towne on the south side, from the east to the west parte, in so much that the towne seemeth to stand in an Iland, which threatneth great hurt to the land and countrie thereabouts, and may (in time) growe very dangerous.

The enemies perceiuing them of the towne to be very still, and those likewise of sir Frances Veres trenches to hold themselves more quiet than they had bin accustomed, sent out a souldier to espie their doings: one of the souldiers that came from London spying this stragler, demanded of such as were next him in the trenches, what he meant thus to approche their trenches: it was answered, they knew not, except hee came as a spie: then quoth the English souldier, I will goe out and talke with him: presently he made toward this stragler, and making but few wordes, they fell to blowes, and so continued a good space, the camp on thone side, and the town on thother, beholding them, & noting which did best: In the end they were both wounded, and so departed: the Englishman brought with him his enemies hat, and a staffe or halfe pike, which he valiantly won and brought into the trenches.

Since

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Since the besieging of this Towne, the five Gallies of Sluice were at sea, and (meeting with two ships laden with marchandize, which came from Dort in Holland, having a shippe of warre for their conuoy and defence) there began a hote fight on both sides, and it continued long: the shippe of warre bestowed his shot so well, that hee did great spoyle to the Gallies, and slewe many of their men, but in the end, the Gallies boarded the shippe, (and firing her) did, without mercie, put seauentie fire men to the sword, and saved onely ten persons, which, for the most part, are shorn, and made slaues. It was reported, that this shippe of warre was, by oversight, set on fire with their owne powder: but by Letters out of Holland, it seemeth to be otherwise, for it is written from thence, that it pleased God to saue one man verie miraculously, who (committing himselfe to the mercie of God, and of the mercifull Seas, vpon a peece of a Wasse) rather than hee would fall into the handes of his bloody enemies: after hee had so floated vpon the waues of the Sea an houre or two, he was taken vp by an other ship, which (by Gods prouidence) had spied the man thus duiuing on the water. This man (after his coming into Holland) made true reporte hereof, as is aboue declared.

Within the Towne, nere vnto the west end, they haue raised a mount, whereon is planted twelue cannons, and fire demy cannons, wherewith they beate downe, and desface the ennemies workes without.

Lastly, such as came on wednesday last out of Ostend, bearing the fift day of this present August, report, that the enemy hath these eight dayes layne still, and done nothing, and affirme, the souldiers of Ostend to be of an inuincible courage, not esteeming any force of the enemy, and that there is no cause of feare, nor want, for all things are daily in most plentiful sort brought vnto them, assuring themselves, that the enemy shall (in the end) be forced to depart with shame and dishonour, and perhappes with greater losse than he now thinketh vpon, which God for his mercies sake graunt, Amen.

Finis.